

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Patricia L. Young (202) 205-6740

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SBA ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO THE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS' ADVISORY BOARD

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today announced the appointment of a successful Alaskan small business owner to the national advisory board of the SBA's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) program and the selection of the board's new chairperson for fiscal 2000.

Current advisory board member, Loretta Kaminsky, CEO and owner of Lou-retta's Custom Chocolates, Inc. in Buffalo, N.Y., will serve as the board's new chairperson, effective October 1. Eleanor Andrews, CEO of The Andrews Group in Anchorage, Alaska, will serve on the national board for a term of three years, providing advice and counsel on the administration and improvement of SBDC programs nationwide.

"We are delighted with Ms. Kaminsky's new leadership role on the SBDC advisory board," SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez said. **"As an advisory board member for the past year, she has contributed greatly to the successful administration of SBDC programs nationwide."**

"And Ms. Andrew's extensive knowledge of the challenges business owners face, especially women and minorities, brings invaluable insight and perspective to the board and the SBDC program."

Johnnie Albertson, the SBA's associate administrator for the SBDC program added that "the program has an excellent board of directors and I'm looking forward to working with them on issues affecting the SBDC program."

Ms. Kaminsky founded Lou-retta's Custom Chocolates, a manufacturer of internationally known gourmet chocolates and fancy foods, in 1984. Active in community affairs, Ms. Kaminsky serves as a member or officer of nearly a dozen organizations. She has received numerous entrepreneurial awards including the New York State Small Business Development Center Business Person of the Year. Ms. Kaminsky currently serves on the New York SBDC Advisory Board and is a frequent lecturer on entrepreneurship.

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Ms. Andrews started her company in 1987. The Andrews Group provides management consulting services to government and industry. The firm also performs base operating services, logistics support, and information technology contracts for the federal government and contractors in Alaska. Her list of clients includes the Federal Aviation Commission, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force. Ms. Andrews is very active in community and civic organizations and has received numerous awards for excellence in business, including the Alaska Small Business Person of the Year award in 1998.

Established in 1982, the SBDC national advisory board provides advice to the SBA on ways to advance and improve the national and local SBDC programs and operations.

The SBA's SBDC program is a cooperative effort of the private sector, the educational community, and federal, state and local governments to deliver counseling, training, and technical assistance in all aspects of small business management through its 1,000 centers nationwide. Nationally, the SBDC program provided counseling and training to more than 545,000 clients in fiscal 1998.

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The U.S. Small Business Administration, established in 1953, provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run, and grow their businesses. With a portfolio of business loans, loan guarantees and disaster loans worth more than \$45 billion, the SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses. Last year, the SBA offered management and technical assistance to more than one million small business owners. The SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses.

America's 24 million small businesses employ more than 50 percent of the private workforce, generate more than half of the nation's gross domestic product, and are the principal source of new jobs in the U.S. economy.

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